

they were hard on my father, had'n't he his revenge, for he nigh broke their hearts with his stupidity ; oh ! nothing in life could equal him ; devil a thing, no matter how easy, he could learn at all, and, so far from caring for being in confinement, it was that he liked the best. Every sergeant in the regiment had a trial of him, but all to no good, and he seemed striving so hard to learn all the while, that they were loath to punish him, the old rogue !

"This was going on for some time, when, one day, news came in that a body of rebels, as they called them, was coming down from the Cap of Mulnawick, to storm the town and burn all before them. The whole regiment was of course under arms, and great preparations were made for a battle, meanwhile patrols were ordered to scour the roads, and sentries posted at every turn of the way, and every rising ground, to give warning when the boys came in sight, and my father was placed at the bridge of Drumsnag, in the wildest and bleakest part of the whole country, with nothing but furze mountains on every side, and a straight going road over the top of them.

"This is pleasant," says my father, as soon as they left him there alone by himself, with no human craythure to spake to, nor a whiskey shop within ten miles of him ; "cowl'd comfort," said he on a winter's day, and faix but I've a mind to give you the slip."

Well, he put his gun down on the bridge, and he lit his pipe, and sat down under an ould tree, and began to ruminate upon his affairs.

"Oh, then, it's wishing it well I am," says he, "for sodgering ; and, bad luck to the hammer that struck the shilling that listed me, that's all," for he was mighty low in his heart.

Just then a noise came rattling down near him ; he listened, and before he could get on his legs down comes the General, ould Cahoon, with an orderly after him.

"Who goes that ?" says my father.

"The round," says the General, looking about all the time to see where was the sentry, for my father was snug under the tree.

"What round ?" says my father,

"The grand round," says the General, more puzzled than afore.

"Pass on, grand round, and God save you kindly," says my father, putting his pipe in his mouth again, for he thought all was over.

"D——n your soul, where are you ?" says the General, for sorrow a bit of my father could he see yet.

"It's here I am," says he, "and a cowl'd place I have of it ; and av it wasn't for the pipe I'd be lost entirely."

"The words wasn't well out of his mouth when the General began laughing, till ye'd think he'd fall off his horse ; and the dragon behind him—more by

token, they say it wasn't right for him—laughed as loud as himself.

"Yer a droll sentry," says the General, as soon as he could speak.

"Be gorra, it's little fun there's left in me," says my father, "with this drilling and parading, and blackguarding about the roads all night."

"And is this the way you salute your officer ?" says the General.

"Just so," says my father ; devil a more politeness they ever taught me."

"What regiment do you belong to ?" says the General.

"The North Cork, bad luck to them," says my father, with a sigh.

"They ought to be proud of ye," says the General.

"I'm sarry for it," says my father, sorrowfully, "for may be they'll keep me the longer."

"Well, my good fellow," says the General, "I havn't more time to waste here ; but let me teach you something before I go. Whenever your officer passes, it's your duty to present arms to him."

"Arrah, it's jokin' ye are," says my father.

"No, I'm in earnest," says he, "as ye might learn to your cost if I brought you to a court martial."

"Well, there's no knowing," says my father "what they'd be up to ; but sure if that's all I'll do it with all 'the veins,' whenever yer coming this way again."

The General began to laugh again here, but said.

"I'm coming back in the evening," says he, "and mind you don't forget your respect to your officer."

"Never fear, sir," says my father, "and many thanks to you for your kindness in telling me."

Away went the General, and the orderly after him, and in ten minutes they were out of sight.

The night was falling fast, and one half of the mountain was quite dark already, when my father began to think they were forgetting him entirely. He looked one way, and he looked another, but sorra bit of a sergeant's guard was coming to relieve him. There he was, fresh and fasting, and daren't go for the bare life. "I'll give you a quarter of an hour more," says my father, "till the light leaves the rock up there : after that," says he, "by the mass ! I'll be off, let it cost me what it may."

Well, sure enough, his courage was not needed this time ; for what did he see at the same moment but a shadow of something coming down the road, opposite the bridge ; he looked again ; and then he made out the General himself, that was walking his horse down the steep part of the mountain, followed by the orderly. My father immediately took up his musket off the wall, settled his belts, shook the ashes out of his pipe, and put it into his pocket, making himself as smart and neat looking as could be, determining, when ould Cahoon came up, to ask him for leave to go home, at least for the night. Well,